



## **S2421 (Kaplan) / A2444 (Solages)**

### **What Does the Bill Do?**

- If enacted, this bill would require all school districts to maintain a school library in each elementary and secondary school and to employ a certified school library media specialist for each such school library.
- The legislation also provides a waiver process that can be used by districts that fall within a designated shortage area for library media specialists.

### **Why is a School Library important?**

- The school library is often the first experience children have with a library and its resources.
- These facilities provide learners and educators with equitable access to print and non-print materials that:
  - Represent diversity and are culturally reflective
  - Support students in developing information literacy skills through an inquiry process to learn, synthesize, create, and contribute to the global community
  - Broaden and deepen understanding of curriculum
- School libraries are dynamic educational spaces where students pursue both academic and personal learning.
- School libraries which offer a modern technological infrastructure that is accessible to all students positively impacts student achievement based on evidence of higher test scores specifically for minority and disadvantaged students. (NYSED Informational Brief)

### **Why is a Certified Librarian important?**

- School librarians facilitate learning both in the library and throughout the school. As instructional partners and leaders, the school librarian has a unique

understanding of the curriculum and how best to integrate resources and learning opportunities across content areas and grade levels.

- School librarians “provide effective leadership in areas of curriculum development, instructional design, technology integration, professional development, student advocacy, information literacy instruction and collaboration.” (NYSED Informational Brief)
- School librarians are experts in teaching skills related to:
  - Inquiry
  - Critical Thinking
  - Reflection
  - Problem solving
- School librarians prepare students for success in college, careers, and civic engagement by teaching skills related to information literacy, digital literacy, media literacy, and visual literacy.
- School librarians facilitate the development of student agency, allowing students to take ownership and responsibility for their own learning.

### **Did You Know?**

- Students who attend schools with certified school librarians and quality school library facilities “perform better on standardized tests and are more likely to graduate, even after controlling for school size and student income level.” (Coker 2015)
- There is evidence of increased student achievement as well as more active teacher leadership in school environments where school librarians assist in the alignment of curriculum to state standards and in school-wide professional development activities. (NYC Library Brief)
- The formation of information literacy skills and critical thinking skills begins in early childhood. Without equitable access to instruction from effective school librarians, students will not have the scaffolding needed to participate fully in a democracy.